

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
OCTOBER 30, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: M. Evette Brantley, Co-Chair; Lydia Martinez, Co-chair;
Jack Banta; Council President Thomas McCarthy, Michelle Lyons
Steven Stafstrom (7:11 p.m.)

OTHERS: David Kooris, OPED Director; William Coleman, OPED Neighborhood
Development, Sean Richardson, Boot Camp

CALL TO ORDER.

Council Member Brantley called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2013.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2013.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2013 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

81-12 Proposed Resolution adopting the South Avenue Project Development Plan and authorizing the Bridgeport Port Authority to acquire, including by eminent domain, certain real properties within the plan area.

Mr. Kooris requested this agenda item be tabled.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 81-12 PROPOSED RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE SOUTH AVENUE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND AUTHORIZING THE BRIDGEPORT PORT AUTHORITY TO ACQUIRE, INCLUDING BY EMINENT DOMAIN, CERTAIN REAL PROPERTIES WITHIN THE PLAN AREA.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 81-12 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Stafstrom joined the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

168-12 Option Agreement for the Acquisitions of 141 Stratford Avenue and 173 Stratford Avenue for the Development of a Commercial Office Complex.

Mr. Kooris requested this agenda item be tabled. He explained that the City was still working through the remediation issues and working with tenant on Phase III plan. He said that OPED was expecting to bring the item before the council in early next year.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 168-12 OPTION AGREEMENT FOR THE ACQUISITIONS OF 141 STRATFORD AVENUE AND 173 STRATFORD AVENUE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMERCIAL OFFICE COMPLEX.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 168-12 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

169-12 Disposition of City-Owned Properties in the East End for the development of an Urban Agriculture Center.

Mr. Coleman distributed copies of a document to the Committee members. Mr. Sean Richardson was present to answer questions on the project. The Committee wished to review more of the details regarding the ground lease.

Mr. Coleman the reviewed the details of the proposed ground lease. The State will be contributing 1 million dollars towards the remediation. The property has been appraised. Boot Camp will be paying the cost of the property over 12 years. The first two years, the project will be starting up and no payments will be required. During The remaining 10 years, the business will be paying for the cost of the property. The developers are required to hold the City harmless for any additional contamination and the City agrees to hold the developer harmless from past contamination. Mr. Coleman reviewed the four phases that will result in a four million dollar investment. The default terms are stronger in terms of a ground lease than an actual property sale.

Council Member Martinez asked about the contamination on the parcel. Mr. Richardson said that by using hydroponically growing, it will allow the parcel to be used safely. The property will be encapsulated in concrete with a cap on the top. The elevation of the site will be increased by 3 feet to prevent flooding.

Council Member Martinez asked about the hydroponic tanks. Mr. Richardson gave a brief overview of how this is done. The water is recycled in a closed loop system. There is some evaporation from the trays, but the water will not be constantly discharged.

Council President McCarthy said that he felt that this is what the City should be doing with contaminated parcels.

Council Member Brantley asked about the community center. Mr. Richardson said that the group was working with one of the local ministers to train the workers through the UConn's

hydroponic program. When the Community Center isn't being used by the business, the local community will be able to have some access to it. There will be three to six programs for children. He went on to speak about urban food deserts and how important it is educate the youth about nutrition and proper diet. Also the youth will be exposed to the fact that agriculture is not limited to rural areas. The facility will be state of the art and controlled by computers and the students will be able to learn about this.

The discussion then moved to the details of the modular community center.

Council Member Banta asked about the two parcels. Mr. Richardson reviewed the details. He said that both sites would be encapsulated. The Greenhouses will be on the former Mount Trashmore, and the community Center on the second parcel. Mr. Coleman then said that using the parcel as commercial property requires less stringent contamination requirements than if it was residential.

Council Member Martinez asked about the profits. Mr. Richardson explained that the modest profit will be used for the project. There will be a retail center that will sell the produce. This will allow the local residents to purchase

The entire property is taxable. The operation of the community center will be non-profit but the developer is a for profit entity.

Council Member Lyons asked about the time line for the grant funding. Mr. Kooris said that he had been awarded a grant some months ago and just received the contract recently, so the timelines are often unpredictable. Mr. Richardson said that once the permission is granted, the developer is ready to move. He outlined the various steps of construction for the Council Members.

Council Member Banta asked about the details of the capping and how this would be done. Mr. Richardson said that there would be geo-thermal fabric laid down and three feet of soil placed on top.

Council Member Martinez asked what kind of experience the group had in doing this type of project. Mr. Richardson said that while this was the first type of greenhouse construction, but that they had four decades of gardening experience.

Council Member Brantley said that she welcomed this project on this site. This was years in coming.

Council Member Martinez said that many of the residents were from farms outside of the country. She wished to know if they would be able to apply for work. Mr. Richardson said that the website had been redesigned for applications.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO ENTER EXHIBIT 1-169-12 THE PROPOSED THE RESOLUTION BY THE BRIDGEPORT CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT TO TRANSFER BY GROUND LEASE CERTAIN PROPERTIES IN THE EAST END FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AGRICULTURE CENTER.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO AMEND BY SUBSTITUTION THE EXISTING RESOLUTION WITH THE EXISTING RESOLUTION AS SUBMITTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 169-12 DISPOSITION OF CITY OWNED PROPERTIES IN THE EAST END FRO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN URBAN AGRICULTURE CENTER AS AMENDED**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service

City Of Bridgeport
Economic And Community Development
And Environment Committee
Special Meeting
October 30, 2013